(a) the number of LPG agencies allotted to the State of Assam during the last five years, district-wise; and

(b) the target set for allotment of new LPG agencies in the State during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) As on 1.4.2000, there were 156 LPG distributorships in operation in Assam. In order to meet the increased demand of the LPG, in addition to the locations pending from the previous Marketing Plans, 69 LPG distributorships have been included for Assam in the Marketing Plan 1996—98.

India's request to OPEC to enhance crude oil production

†99. SHRI D. P. YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has requested the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) to enhance the production of crude oil and to reduce its prices in the interest of developing countries;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether despite the immense possibilities of the investment in the petroleum sector of the country, the foreign investors are taking less interest due to red-tapism; and

(d) if so, what action has been taken by Government to prevent it and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) In March 2000 India had made a request to OPEC Members to increase the production level of crude oil which would facilitate bringing down the oil prices to sustainable stable levels in the interest of both the producing and consuming countries.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.